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776 778 782 worship. No image is found, but there are exceptions. In Rewa State it was said that she should be worshipped at least twice a year: two days before the *Dasara* festival (September-October) and eight days after Chaita (March-April).

While animal sacrifices are forbidden at the Maihar temple, they may still be offered at the village shrine.[1] One group said that a black [184] kid was the only acceptable offering, while from others it was learned that chickens, lambs and suckling pigs may all be sacrificed. The usual [787] vegetable offerings are likewise acceptable. She frequently possesses people and speaks through them.

Childless women, especially, should worship her and make offerings [842] and sacrifices, so that she may speak to them through the *panda* and tell them what to do before they can expect children. Shardamai is therefore [755] reverenced at this place by childless women. It is also claimed that she can restore sight and cause the blind to walk and is a general miracle worker.

776 785 During *Chaita*, the Hindu month corresponding to parts of March and April of the Christian calendar, there should be an evening fast to Shardamai covering nine days. Regular food may be taken only in the [805] morning, and the evening meal should be limited to water, milk and water-nuts called *singhara* the Water-caltrop (*Trapa bispinosa* or *natans*). [262] On the ninth day the big offering to Shardamai must be made. Before anyone may partake of the meal on the ninth evening, a coconnut[2] must [782] first be broken before the village shrine and offered to her, and then the edible part distributed to those present. Thereafter regular meals may be taken. If possible someone from the village, or better yet several from the chief families should go to Maihar to worship. Their worship at Shardamai's temple and the worship at home will reinforce the bond of friendship which they must maintain.

Shivari or Sheori. Shivari is called the mother of all Kols and served 776 Rama during his exile and search for Sita and has thus become deified. Shivari is nearly always listed by Kols, nevertheless actual worship [778] of her is rare; but Kols talk of her temple somewhere in Rewa and also at Sheori-Narayan near Raipur, eastern Central Provinces. Stories concerning her are found in connection with the study of the origin of the Kols and in the chapter on legends.[3] She probably represents a tribal goddess.

[753 782] *Sitalamai*. This name is a euphemistic title meaning the cool,

1 Kali worship is associated with animal sacrifice and Shardamai is probably equivalent to Durga in Hinduism.

2 Probably a relic of human sacrifice.

3 See pp. 8-10; also Chapter X.

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the point of an iron trident through the cheek or tongue or part of the skin of the neck, and ask the "candidate" to jump and run about with it in place. This is the final test, as it were, of the validity of the claim to be a Kol priest. Further on is a fuller description of the phenomenon of the *hawa*.[1]

Duties of the Priest. The duties of the priest are largely connected with the village shrine. He should keep it in order, offer the cocoanuts and animals, and perform the *hom* sacrifice. He is also the mouthpiece of the goddess. When possessed of the *devi* he is asked questions, and the answers that come from his mouth are not his, but are claimed to be the answers of the *devi* herself.

It is not infrequent that the *panda* is also expected to perform certain magical practices, although he is not as expert in these as the Baiga priest is believed to be. These practices are usually in connection with disease, but it may be any form of divination known to Kols. A child is ill, and the priest is asked for his help in healing the disease. The priest will go before the *devi* and vow to take no food for nine days, and after that to make a *jawara* offering. An earthen *ghara*, wheat and milk are given him. These he takes to the child's house and plants the wheat in the *ghara*. Sometimes this is done in his own house. The wheat is sprinkled daily with water and a little milk. It sprouts and grows, and in nine days, after being taken with ceremony to the village tank or a near-by stream, the earth is washed away. The wheat plants and the roots are then brought back to the house where the child is ill. If by this time the spirit causing the illness has not been satisfied, the wheat stalks and roots will surely satisfy her if left on the roof to dry. Like the stalks, the disease will dry up and disappear.

THE VILLAGE SHRINE. It was noted that each village has its central shrine. This, however, is not the only shrine in the village; there may also be other ones, but there is one which is recognized as the chief place of worship, and it is about this central shrine that the chief religious observances centre. The place of worship is a sanctuary of a god or goddess and not the place of public congregational worship. The pictures on plate xxiv show village shrines, and a ground plan in figure 26 is also given to show the disposition and arrangement of the various concomitants. Some shrines have more in them than others, and frequently a red *sendur* mark and cocoanut shells and ashes are the only sign that worship is carried on there. Hindu influences may be presumed.

1 See p. 188.

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Worship at a Shrine. An account may here be given of the worship of the smallpox goddess as witnessed at a village shrine. The first hint of the matter was the beat of drums as a group approached the shrine. The instrument was a kettle-drum, hung about the neck of the drummer. Following the drummer came a young man with a brass tray filled with small *puris* and cocoanuts, carried on his shoulder. Beside him was a younger boy who was carrying two red flags, one of them rather large and on a long pole, and the other proportionately shorter. Both flags tapered to a point. Next came a woman apparently much perturbed, with dishevelled hair. Her head was partially covered by her *sari*. Close behind was her husband who seemed to be a rather elderly man, and with him was a small boy who appeared to be ill. It was not realized at first that this boy was the victim of smallpox. When they reached the shrine the drummer took his stand to one side and continued to beat his drum, while a woman came up and poured water over the shrine and the representations of Khermai and Asmani *devi*. As the drummer played, the woman with the dishevelled hair, who happened to be the mother of the lad, began to stretch herself repeatedly at full length before the shrine, and then, as it were, measured her length around and around the platform on which the shrine was situated. As she did this, she held a cocoanut in her right hand. She was then followed by her husband who rolled in the dust before the shrine until instructed by the *panda* to measure his length around the shrine as his wife was doing. Just before he came to the shrine his body had been anointed with *haldi* and oil, and this gathered much dust and dirt. The larger boy with the tray also went about the shrine as did the boy who had carried the flags. They did not, however, measure their lengths. An uncle from some other village joined them and each went around seven times in a clockwise direction. Except for the drumming, the measuring of their lengths about the shrine was done in silence. Only the adults actually measured their lengths.

When the proper number rounds had been completed, the group stopped at the steps of the platform in front of Kher *devi's* shrine. The tray of cocoanuts and *puris* was placed on the platform and the people ascended the steps and sat on the platform. The drummer seated himself and continued the beating of the drum, and the mother of the sick boy began to perform acts in which she appeared to be imploring the deity. She prostrated her head to the ground, then sat up and wildly swung her body, first from the upright position with a sweeping motion, to a position of prostrate petition. Except for the gentle drumming all this too was done in silence. She then poured water over the shrine and wiped it carefully with a rag. Asmani

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

778 was washed as well. The *puris* were then put right beside the shrine
796 in piles and the cocoanuts in front. The two flags carried by the
755 boy were set up along with others which had accumulated at the shrine, the larger by Khermai and the smaller one by Asmanimai. Two or three of the cocoanuts were then broken and laid before the *devis*.

Another procession now started, this time around the shrine of Khermai only. It too went in a clockwise direction, not around the platform as a whole, but on the platform and around the *devi*. This time three rounds were made. The woman with the dishevelled hair and her husband both measured their lengths in this procession, but the others did not do so, they simply walked around. The group then gathered again in front of Khermai and the woman once more prostrated herself, although not as vigorously as before. In the meantime the drummer came down and sat beside a small hedge near the shrine. His wife spread out a piece of cloth in front of him, and the villagers proceeded to pour out their offerings of rice, wheat, *dal* and the like onto the cloth. It was said that this went to the drummer. At the same time individual members of the group on the platform were breaking the remaining cocoanuts into small pieces. These were distributed to everyone within sight. The *puris* were not distributed; that would be done later on.

The accompanying diagram shows the arrangement of this shrine and gives an idea of what was done. See figure 27 and plate XXV.

778 *Offerings at the Shrines.* Considerable mention has been made
782 of the offerings presented at Kol shrines, but more should be added and the matter summarized.

The general tendency is toward offerings of cocoanuts and food rather than animals. This is partly due to economic reasons, but may also be due to the influence of the Vaishnavite sect of Hinduism.

The most common single offering is the *hom*, which is essentially a fire sacrifice. This must have been borrowed from the Hindus. Into the fire burning before the deity is dropped *ghi* and incense. Sometimes pieces of cocoanut, or seeds and drops of lime juice are added.

The cocoanut is universally offered, and it has been suggested
[834] that it is symbolic of human sacrifice and that the shell represents the human skull. As a rule Kols seem to have no knowledge of this point
[773] of view. At the temple of Shardamai and Maihar, the Brahmin priest told us the cocoanuts were symbolical of the head of a certain Alhandal who used to bathe Shardamai daily with water and finally sacrificed his own head to her. She was so pleased at this that she gave him the gift of immortality. According to Crooke, Alha and Udal were

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two Banaphar Rajput heroes engaged in a war between two Rajput clans. This was dated about 1165-1203 A.D.[1]

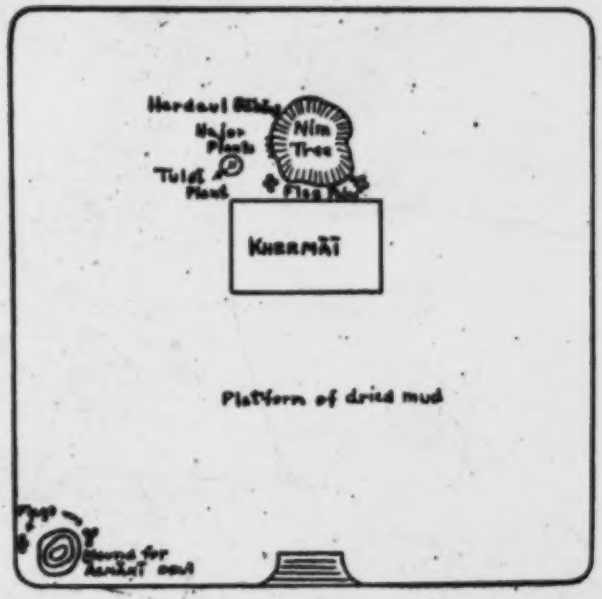

Fig. 27

Usually the cocoanut is first laid whole before the deity, and after the ceremonies have been performed and any invocations offered by the *panda*, the cocoanut is broken by hitting it on the ground or on a stone. It is always struck on the stone; not broken by being hit by a stone or other instrument. The shell is thrown aside and the edible portion placed before the deity. Pieces are distributed to each of the worshippers and onlookers, who then eat before her. A priest may break a cocoanut in the absence of the offerer, if the latter is not able to be present.

Lemons or limes are also offered. These please and attract the *devis*. They are also liked by demons and may attract them. Should

1 *Ibid.*, p. 288.

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789 823 *Iron* is, on the whole, probably the most common of protective metals; and while some put copper above iron, nevertheless in the case of the Kols, iron appears to be more widely used than copper. The use of iron takes many forms. A woman should always have a bit of iron about her as she is usually exposed to evil influences more than are the men folk. This may take the form of a bracelet, an anklet, a ring on the finger, or an iron ring about the neck. Again it may be just a piece of the metal tied somewhere in the garments or on a string about the waist. [755] A sick man should always have iron about him to prevent further demonic influences during his period of helplessness. An iron key is a protective and even nails in shoes are useful in this respect. [513] A piece of iron ought to be under the head as one sleeps and iron nails are often driven into the four corners of a wooden cot should the Kol sleep on one. In the case of children iron helps to repel the evil eye. [585] At the wedding time the bridegroom carries iron about with him, and iron is found in the wedding booth.

Iron protects houses from the entry of evil spirits and makes their habitation there impossible. Therefore, when a house is built [342] iron is buried under the floor, particularly near the threshold. Even though unseen by the human eye it will influence the demons and [775] they fear to enter and abide in the house. Perhaps *bhuts* are thought of as still living in the stone age and dreading the new-fangled iron and its power to break the strongest things of which they know.

789 [314] *Lac*, obtained from the gum of the *Khairwar* tree (*Acacia catechu*), and prepared in the form of bangles and beads, averts the evil eye and wards off spirits. This is variously coloured.

Lampblack is widely used for children and protects them from [751] the evil eye. While it disguises them and renders them less attractive, it also has the practical purpose of protecting the eye from the glare of the sun. The lampblack, mixed with oil to make a paste, is placed just below the eyes and often gives the child a weird and unnatural appearance.

789 237 291 *Leather* is a very common devil-scarer throughout India and has its uses for the Kols, such as the custom of employing it in connection with the building of houses. For protection, in this instance, an old shoe will generally be found stuck somewhere about the wall which is being built. This is apparent in the picture appearing in connection with building customs.[1] If they can be afforded, leather shoes with nails in them are a double protection, and no Kol goes on a long journey with- [484] out taking a pair of country shoes with him even though he seldom uses them. He will carry them hanging from a stick or in his hands.

1 See plate VIII.

1;Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

171 539 789 1. To cast out an evil spirit:

Kali, Kali, maha Kali; Brahma ki beti, dono hatha bajawe thali jaha dekho waha hali; teri shakti meri bhakti. Isi saikat bhut, churel, kabbis, jind, dono ho paharai, na to dhobinke ghat nahawe.

Kali, Kali, great Kali; daughter of Brahma, who with both hands plays upon the brass plate; wherever one looks there she is. Her strength is my devotion. In this way bhut, churel, kabbis, jind, all are caught. If not, let her (Kali) go to the dhobi ghat and take a bath.

171 755 789 539 2. For fevers and the casting out of evil spirits:

Kalobharo ghungarwala, hatha karo, phulo ki mala chausath jogon sewa men. chala, dekho dekhan. Nazar ka tala, raja praja dhaiwa tuhi sab ki dristi bande tuhi. Main puja pawa tuhi. Teri kiya sabi kuchha hohi. Sekhi Bharo mantra ki shakti. Phro mantra Ishwara wacha.

Kalo bharo, curly-headed, with garlands in your hands and with sixty-four goddesses at your service: look! Whoever has an evil eye, whether king or subject, control them all with but a glance. By worshipping you I get your spirit. Through me you can do everything. Let us see the power of Bharo charm. I cast a spell in Ishwara's (God's) name.

3. To cure fevers and drowsiness:

Ardha sisi kuku karib per pachhara, mukh more amukhari sisa, rahe sir men to Shivari ki ain.

By making a sound of *kuku* we overcome the spirit; with face turned, head diseased; by Shivari's name we say this.

4. To drive off fever, pain and bodily troubles:

Marhi, Marhi, mai pukari, tajo margui majh dhar. Uni murda ka dhuan, ka akuar dekha ho, bukhara, dard, na achha ho; to meri Mari na kahawe.

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Marhi, Marhi, I call you. Thou who are in the heart of the cemetery. By merely looking at the smoke of that dead body drive out fever, pain and all that is not well; for if they do not depart then she is not my Marhi.

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5. To bring a curse upon, or even to kill an enemy:

Chandi ke uppar Chandi awe. Muth phero nao. Khandi chakra uppar chakra dhawe. Nand masi ki hari age ari, na tak, cha tak, pherna sath muth pherayu, tin so sath. Sachhi meri Chandi.

Chandi after Chandi appears: with moving form and circle; wheel after wheel comes. We have waited for this month and the time is exact. Now go here, now go there, make sixty circles with this instrument (may be a knife is in the hand). Yea, three hundred and sixty circles. My Chandi is true.

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6. For cure from illness:

Khermai, Khermai, Khermai, main pukharu. Teri dara yadi yeh achhi na kare to no kahawe sachhi meri Khermai. Washa khali na jai to dhobi ghat na hawe.

Khermai, Khermai, Khermai, I call to you. I am at your door. If you do not cure this one then you are not truly my Khermai. No, her words never fail, (but if you do not come) then better go to the dhobi ghat, and take your bath.

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Probably no rational interpretation of these *mantras* is possible. The translations are more or less literal and no translation can really give the feeling put into them. They call upon the gods, plead with them, challenge them, threaten them. To tell one to go out and bathe where the *dhobis* wash clothes is an insult: no decent person would do such a thing. If the goddess can be angered she may accomplish the task just to prove that she is not what the speaker insinuates. The goddesses are made in the likeness of unstable and fickle persons and thus partake of human failings. When the *mantra* is properly recited it is thought to have an inherent power to force the deity to do what the one using the *mantra* desires. The above

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171 789 776 examples are current among low caste Hindus and do not represent the more polished type to be found higher up.

Milk. The use of milk has been mentioned in connection with 272 776 the magic circle. The good spirits like it, and certain evil spirits are passionately fond of it. Milk is scattered over the ashes after the 782 funeral pyre has burnt down. Milk propitiates Nag, the serpent god. 789

Names. Great care should be exercised in the selection and use 551 of names, as they become a part of one's personality. A good name is also attractive to evil spirits, and if the spirits come to know that a 789 certain child has such a name they may make an attack on the innocent thing. Therefore, call the child by an evil name such as 'fly', 'filth', 'one-eyed', and the spirits will not condescend to notice him. [754] Such names protect in another manner as well. If one gets possession of the name of someone—his real name—he may, through the charms of black magic, work harm to the person concerned. Therefore the child's true name should never be known to people lest they should work ill with it. The use of magic on a false name is ineffective and no harm can come to one.

789 *Noises* of various types are demon-scarers for they dislike noise; [825] hence the beating of drums, the occasional fireworks and other devices, by which loud noises are produced when necessary.

Nuts and Seeds of various kinds are useful. Many Kol children 789 have a *ghata* nut (*Ziziphys xylopyrus?*) tied to a string which is hung 824 somewhere about the person, often on the wrist. Mustard seeds are freely sprinkled about if spirits are expected, and, as in the case of limes, distract their attention. They are scattered round the place where a body is burnt. Black *urad* pulse (*Phaseolus radiatus*) is often [585] used on similar occasions. The *supari* nut (*Areca catechu*) is placed below the sacred pole in the marriage booth and under the foundation stone of the house. These are in this manner protected from evil.

Salt has its magic use among the Kols. It has a preservative 789 power, and this, together with its power over demons, accounts for 263 its being scattered over the place where the dead have been cremated. [765] It should not be put into the food during the period of mourning after a death in the home, and the chief mourner should not use it for a year.

755 *Scape Animals.* Among Kols there is a belief that an evil spirit 787 resident in a man may be transferred to an animal and the man thus freed. It is not unusual to bring a man believed to be possessed of 825 a spirit before the shrine together with a chicken or goat, usually the 782 former. The *panda* invokes Khermai amid singing and drumming, or mostly drumming, and there may be a *baiga* along with it. Under

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these conditions the evil spirit is sternly addressed and in the name of Khermai is ordered to leave the person affected and enter the chicken. Upon being satisfied that the transaction has actually occurred there are now two or three ways of dealing with the chicken. The most common procedure is to sacrifice it to Khermai, and as the blood is sprinkled at the base of the shrine she is implored to conduct the evil spirit far away so that it may trouble them no more. The less common method is to take the chicken into the jungle, the further away the better, and loose it there, invoking Khermai to let the spirit be in the chicken as long as the latter lives; then when the chicken dies, never to allow the spirit to be able to find its way back to the village. If the chicken should return alive to the village it would mean that the spirit would also re-enter and harm someone.

Supa. The *supa* or winnowing fan is a great protective and has many magical uses. The new-born infant is laid in it and no evil spirit will dare touch him there. It is used in various wave ceremonies, notably during the wedding cycle. It is used to cast out demons and to detect demon possession.

Tattooing has its protective value and in an earlier section this was discussed. It was noted that it protected against disease and aided in the necessary household activities.[1]

Threads, red or black in colour, are useful about the neck. This applies particularly to the child, but the adult often has one somewhere on his person. At *Rakshabandan* time the opposite sexes tie threads on members of the family. Threads are used in connection with the marriage of trees and a thread is wrapped seven times around the marriage pole. Threads are often knotted to afford further protection.

Thorns. Thorns afford great trouble to the spirits. They are put over the bodies of the deceased in the graves and are often put about the houses, where they serve the dual purpose of keeping off both beast and spirit. They are used in magical practices, so that when a jackal crosses the road a pile of thorns should be set up, a stone put in the centre, and with one's foot placed on the stone the jackal should be roundly cursed.

Trees and Plants. Any tree associated with the gods is holy and keeps away evil powers and influences. A *charpai* or cot of *nim* wood is very useful as it protects one when he is helpless in his sleep. Some *nim* (*Melia azadirachta*) should always be placed in the lying-

1. See pp. 29-31.

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it is like the chaff being driven away and lost. While the *supa* is being waved the Baiga blows, and thus the divine afflatus is communicated to the person.

There is also a magic way of warding off the evil eye and removing its power from one affected by it. A Baiga is called, who, after the usual preparations and offerings, takes a stick and dips it in *til* oil. This is lighted and held over a vessel filled with water, all being performed in the presence of the person suspected of being the victim of the evil eye. If drops of the burning oil fall into the water with a hissing sound the person affected at once begins to feel the influence of the evil eye passing from him. But if the hairs on his body begin to stand up and he begins to feel faint, it is a sure sign that something is wrong and that there is an evil spirit in the case, or that the power of the evil eye requires still stronger measures to remove it.

Kols also believe in, and practise, what may conveniently be called "cross-roads magic". The afflicted person is carried on a bed to the particular cross-roads where the ceremony is to be performed. He is set down in the centre and the friends who brought him make the offerings, which should be sacrificed in the same way as they would be at the village shrine. This may be done at any time of the day or night, but to be really effective it should not be witnessed by any stranger. If some one should approach while the sacrifices are being offered he will be warned away, for if he comes he may break the spell or may himself be affected. It is thought that the disease afflicting the person is loosed at the cross-roads and will attach itself to the first person who passes that way. For this reason Kols usually avoid cross-roads and if possible will pass by some other way. Sometimes a scape animal is released after the offerings are made, and it is believed that he will carry the disease away.

MEDICINES AND MAGIC. Among Kols illness and disease are often ascribed to the work of unfriendly spirits. Cholera and small-pox are particularly the work of the goddesses, and only through them can they be controlled. Other diseases are due to lesser evil spirits. In spite of this, there is also the attitude that in many cases illness is due to the foolishness of man, and that many types of illness can be cured by means of home remedies. Failing these, or any other explanation, the illness is looked upon as indeed the work of a spirit. There are many remedies in use by the Kols for the diseases which abound in India, and the remedies in common use among them are listed below.

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dipped into the water and the solution is then taken. Following the taking of the *guṛ* solution a lemon is cut in half and salted and peppered. The two halves are left on the roof over-night and should be sucked the next morning. Another report is that a good remedy for malaria is to grind together *golmirich* (black pepper), *long* (cloves), and *mitha lakri* (licorice). The paste is put into a bit of water and swallowed

Pain in the abdomen : this is relieved by rubbing a mixture of kerosene and mustard oil over the affected part.

Smallpox : there is no remedy for this, as it is due to a goddess and her will, but care should be taken that the patient takes only light foods during this period.

Snake bites : one should chew leaves of the *nim* tree. Crooke notes that "in Ahmednagar when a man is bitten by a snake he is taken to Bahiroba's temple, crushed Nim leaves mixed with chillies are administered, and the branches are waved over his head."[1]

Stomach trouble : for this the leaves of the *Babul* tree, (*Acacia arabica*) should be chewed and eaten.

Swellings : if it be the thighs that have swelled, *ghi* should be applied and rubbed in well. At the same time *Hing* paste (a variety of asafetida) should be applied to the nails of the leg affected.

Wounds : *chuna* (lime) is mixed with the juice of the *Kattha* tree (*Acacia catechu*) and the paste applied. The juice of this tree has good astringent qualities.

Fresh cow dung is very commonly applied, especially to the wounds of children.

The bark of the *Tinsa* tree (*Eugenia dalbergioides*) is ground into a paste and stops the bleeding from a wound.

For the wounds made by thrusting the iron trident through the tongue or cheek at the *jawara* season, the following mixture should be applied : Lime juice, some ground onion, *ghi*, wood ashes and *pan* leaves (*Piper betel*).

It is usual that each village has its *baid* or medicine man who suggests these simple remedies and advises what should be done. However, there may be no such person in the village, and even if there is such, the Kols have great faith in the Baiga, and may go to him.

1 Crooke, W., *Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India*, p. 410.

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648 Kols, Baigas and Gonds live in close association under village condi-
756 tions. The Baiga priest is revered by both Kols and Gonds, and it is
755 asserted that he has a *deva* living within him which gives him insight as to what should be done. The Baiga, however, is more interested in the occult than he is in prescribing remedies, and if he believes the illness is due to a spirit, he performs over the ill person the *supa* ceremony. It is said that he takes a *supa* (winnowing fan) and places on it a little lamp (*diya*), *ghi* being used to make it burn. The Baiga sits before this and begins to mumble *mantras* and to concentrate on the fire. He calls the *devi* or *deva* when he feels that the time is ripe. When the *devi* arrives, the Baiga falls down in a trance, for the spirit has full possession of him and speaks through him to the people present, telling them just what they must do. This usually takes the form of the demand for some offering to be made either to the goddess speaking through the Baiga or to some other deity named by her, generally an animal: a chicken, goat or pig. As soon as the trance is over, the members of the household begin to take steps to fulfil the words spoken through the Baiga, for the man should start to mend as soon as the offerings are accomplished. If nothing is done, the *devi* will be angry, and the patient is almost sure to die. Should the man die in spite of the offerings, it is said that something was probably wrong with them and the *devi* was not pleased. This ceremony is termed by the Kols *totak vidha*, and requires the winnowing fan, the lamp burning in an earthen vessel, and the presence of the deity. For this service the Baiga charges a fee depending upon the capacity of the family to pay. The fee is decided on by the Baiga after careful inquiry and is said usually to be high. If it should not be paid, the *devi* is angered and the man may die. Sometimes, they say, the ceremony puts them in debt, hence they may hesitate to call in a Baiga.

755 Another form of the *supa* ceremony is this: the person from
[516] whom a spirit or a disease is to be cast is told to sit cross-legged on
[823] the ground, facing east. Those who cure come from that holy direction, made holy because the sun rises from there. Water is sprinkled on the *supa* cleansing it. The person is then fanned by the sorcerer, first from the front and then from the back. As he does this he repeats certain *mantras* supposed to be efficacious in driving evil away. The man is asked to move a few feet away from the *supa* lest it be not exactly the right spot, and the process is repeated.

[237] The sickle is often used in casting out spirits and diseases. The person is asked to sit facing the east. Ashes from burnt cow dung are blown over him from the hand of the Baiga, and then the sickle is waved over and about his head. This will drive the demons away.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

In a "yellow skin disease", probably a form of jaundice, the following procedure may be pursued: One should take some *til* oil and pour it into a brass *lota*. A sickle or knife is waved over this to frighten off any influences which might affect the magical powers resulting from the act to be performed. When it is believed that all the spirits have passed from the region of the cup, the sick man is asked to gaze into the oil and catch his reflection. If he can do this, the disease enters the oil in the cup and may be thrown out, no longer to work harm on the person concerned.

LUCK AND OMENS. There are auspicious and inauspicious days to be observed and taken into account. In the Hindu month there are five unlucky days which, however, vary from month to month; and the Kol, if he cares to, can find these out by consulting a *pandit*. Nothing new should be started on those days, nor a journey begun, nor any wedding preparations undertaken. Some days of the week are more auspicious than others. Kols believe the best days to be, in the order of their merit; Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. Tuesday, Friday and Sunday are the least desirable, but these days are not really bad, it is usually added, but just inauspicious. On Sunday, for example, discussions should be avoided, as such are likely to become heated and quarrels ensue.

Omens should be taken into account, particularly when any new work is being started, as well as during the marriage preparations and at the beginning of a journey. Often a Kol sets forth on a trip to town and returns home not long after he has started. He probably came across some inauspicious happenings, and if the trip should be of a doubtful nature, and he does not quite understand its significance, he will be on the lookout for all kinds of omens. Kols have often promised to come to our stopping places and discuss matters with us, but they have failed to show up. The reason probably lay in the fact that they could not quite figure out why we wanted them, even though we thought we made it clear, and as they started out some omens presented themselves—omens which they probably would never have noted on ordinary occasions, and so they remained at home.

Among good omens the following may be named:

Passing four people seated together.
Meeting a Brahmin just as one starts out.
Passing a vessel filled with water or grain.
Observing a burning lamp by the wayside.
Seeing a woman carrying a healthy male child.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

that village. Wherever it alights it is bound to cause damage and this is a proof that it has really arrived. From this point the spell is said to find its way to the person against whom it was directed. 754

There is no way of seeing spells travel towards one, and should they actually be discharged toward the intended victim harm is certain to result. Often the person gets information beforehand that his enemy is employing a witch to injure him, and he can then suitably protect himself and neither the spell nor any other agency employed by the witch can touch him. [755]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

used for children and in getting good food. I know nothing more than this. 159

Thus a Kol preaches to us a temperance sermon!

DHOLI: A LITERATE KOL AND MAGICAL PRACTICES[1]

We are two brothers and two sisters and our parents are still living and we live together happily. I am the younger son in the family. My elder brother lives separately. I was married when I was fourteen years old; now I am about twentyfour (1937). I started my school work when I was eight or nine. I did not have any trouble for two or three years when I was in school. My parents were very kind to me. I passed the first and second Hindi classes easily and happily. When I came into the third I could hardly study for three or four months, for I was bitten on the thigh by a dog. At once people began to give my parents advice as to what they should do and it was decided that a superstitious ceremony called *jharwana* should be performed. I was led around and forced to look into seven different wells and had *supas* waved over me. During this period some things like small bits of hair were found in the flour put out in a ring about the floor and this, it was said, showed that the dog was not a mad dog. After this was known my parents bought some medicines from a potter, Manawa Kumhar. After taking it I found blood in my urine and this lasted for eight days and I felt very ill. Then my parents gave me some curds and rice with sugar which seemed to make things even worse. My parents being ignorant and always listening to the advice of other people did not pay any attention to this new trouble but kept treating me for dog bite, saying that all my troubles were due to that. I was quite young and had no knowledge of these things and how I should take care of my health. I thought that I had lots of heat in my body and that is why I was suffering from these discharges of blood and hence I used to eat only those things supposed to cool my system. In spite of all this I did not stop my education and the reason for continuing was that I knew very well that I had become very weak physically and could never do hard coolie work, and therefore felt that I should study hard and pass my primary certificate exams, and then teach in some village school where I should get eight to ten rupees a month, which would be sufficient for my maintenance. That is why I kept paying but little attention to my health and kept on taking medicines and trying to work hard at school. The result was just the opposite because due to my bad health I failed in my [582] 159 755 159

1 See plate XXVI.